REMARKS

Claims 17-19 have been amended to specify that the side effects that are reduced are splenomegaly and depletion of platelets. This limitation was already in claim 16. No new matter has been added.

Applicants hereby elect, with traverse, the invention of Group 1, wherein the gene or RNA transcript is from endogenous mammalian chromosomal DNA. Applicants respectfully traverse the restriction requirement on the following grounds. The invention provides CpG-containing oligonucleotides of 17-35 nucleotides in length which have reduced side effects of splenomegaly and depletion of platelets. The present inventors surprisingly discovered that modifying the C and/or G of each CpG dinucleotide, and only the CpG dinucleotide, present in the oligonucleotide with a 2'-O-methyl nucleoside provides this desired result. The result is obtained when the oligonucleotide is administered to a mammal, regardless of the source of the gene or RNA transcript to which the oligonucleotide is complementary. Thus, the invention is independent of the sequence of the gene or RNA transcript to which the oligonucleotide is complementary, provided that such oligonucleotide contains at least one CpG dinucleotide. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the restriction requirement be withdrawn and that claim 16-19 be examined on the merits in their entirety.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above remarks, it is believed that all claims are in condition for allowance, and it is respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue. If the Examiner believes that any discussion of this communication would be helpful, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at 207-791-3078.

Respectfully submitted,

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